

# NEWS RELEASE

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## Be A Man: Get an Exam

**(PIERRE, SD 05/15/08)**— It doesn't take much for a man to get regular oil changes for his car, or to remember to get his home furnace and air conditioner checked out each year.

But many of those same men find it difficult to get themselves checked by a doctor each year.

"It's ironic that many times we hear the old adage that men only think of themselves," says Linda Ahrendt, coordinator of the Nutrition and Physical Activity program for the Dept. of Health. "But this is one area where men don't think enough about themselves."

As part of National Men's Health Week, June 9-15, the South Dakota Department of Health recommends that men visit their doctor once a year for a routine physical exam and regular health screenings.

Sometimes examinations and screenings are needed once a year. Other times they're more or less often. Based on your age, health history, lifestyle, and other important issues, you and your health care provider can determine how often you need to be examined and screened for certain diseases and conditions. These include high blood pressure, high cholesterol, diabetes, and cancers of the skin, prostate, and colon. When problems are found early, your chances for treatment and cure are better. Routine exams and screenings can help save lives.

And don't forget to see your dentist at least once a year, preferably every six months. Many diseases can be detected first by a dentist, and early detection is a key to winning the battle against serious health threats. And if you smoke or chew tobacco, call the Department of Health's Quit Line: 1-866 SD Quits.

For more information on men's health, as well as healthy nutrition and physical activity tips, visit the South Dakota Department of Health's Web site, [www.healthysd.gov](http://www.healthysd.gov). The Web site was created for the state's Nutrition and Physical Activity Plan to encourage South Dakotans to lead more healthy lifestyles. A statewide multi-media marketing campaign is currently underway as part of the state's overall health efforts.

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**The Nutrition and Physical Activity Plan** is the first comprehensive plan to increase healthy eating and physical activity as ways to reduce overweight and obesity levels, and their subsequent risk for chronic diseases such as cardiovascular disease, hypertension, and diabetes. The plan was released in early 2006.

Other programs have been developed as part of the Nutrition and Physical Activity Plan, including a worksite wellness program; “Fit from the Start Initiative,” giving caregivers information on helping children get a healthy start to their lives; “Great Day of Play,” which works in conjunction with state and local parks departments to promote physical activity; and “Healthy Hunter,” which encourages hunters to get fit before the start of hunting season by offering them a six-week nutrition and fitness program.

